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**Talking points by  
Ms. Olga Algayerova  
United Nations Under-Secretary-General  
Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe  
at the Forum of Mayor's  
Side event UEFA: Football as accelerator of change**

**Geneva, 4 April 2022, 13:15-14:45  
Palais des Nations, Mezzanine**

Distinguished Mayors,

Guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are more than happy to sign today the Memorandum of understanding between UEFA and UNECE which shows the successes in building partnerships which support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the UNECE region and beyond. My special thanks go to the UEFA colleagues for co-organizing this event, bringing the trophies for display and for sharing their valuable experiences as speakers.

During the Forum of Mayors that takes place today and tomorrow, we are discussing specific thematic issues related to sustainable urban development, housing and land management. Football events and the work of UEFA are the reason for transformative urban projects in many cities and have become an important force in urban development.

Unlike any other sport in the world, football can mobilize on a large scale. Football matches bring many people together. We want to work together with UEFA to use the power of football to have a positive impact on global issues of environmental sustainability and social responsibility.

As part of the partnership between UEFA and UNECE we will work together and exchange knowledge about the localization of SDGs, sustainable infrastructure as well as on mobility and road safety. They are many topics on which we can cooperate and learn from each, for example the development of non-carbon mobility solutions in cities or the development of guidelines for sustainable infrastructure.

Complex sustainability issues can only be addressed and solved if we work in close collaboration with a diverse range of stakeholders. Football is played and followed by millions of people, especially the young, and the surrounding actions can have an enormous impact on society.

I look forward to our continued work together and the actions to come under this partnership. I would like to wish all of us a dynamic and fruitful dialogue. Let us work together to make cities more sustainable, and a better place to live in.

Thank you.